

No. 185 April 1992

# Hillandale

NEWS

# REGAL

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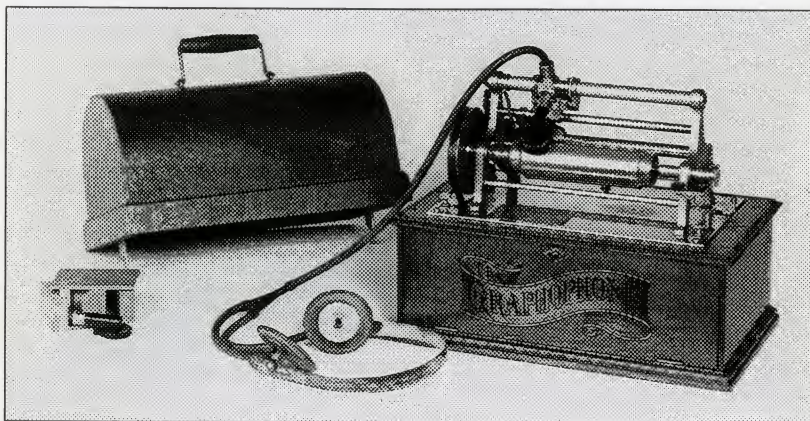
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# HILLANDALE NEWS

The Official Journal of The City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society

Founded 1919

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Front cover illustration: "We are amused..."



## EDITOR'S CHAT

### London Meetings

The Chairman has asked me to point out that **all London Meetings will now start at 6.45pm** unless stated otherwise.

The **April Meeting takes place on Thursday April 23rd** not April 16th as Good Friday is on Friday 17th April and the Holiday week-end begins on that day.

### Use of Floppy Discs

I am now able to receive copy from intending contributors on 3.5" (720Kb & 1.44Mb) or 5.25" (360Kb & 1.2Mb) floppy discs. At the moment I can accept material submitted in ASCII and Microsoft Word.

### Booklist

The Society has negotiated a deal with Pavilion Records Ltd. which enables us to sell Flapper, Opal and Pearl Compact Discs and Cassettes direct to members at favourable terms. These are available from C.L.P.G.S. Booklist c/o George Glastris, [REDACTED] Street, Brighton BN2 2SR at the prices listed below which are post free:

FLAPPER CDs	£10.50
PEARL GEMM CDs	£10.50
OPAL CDs	£11.75
CASSETTES:	
(Pearl GEMM Series & Flapper Series)	£6.50

Pavilion Records Ltd. catalogues are available from the above address to any member who sends a stamped addressed A5 size envelope.

Please note that material intended for inclusion in Hillandale News must reach the Editor not later than **six weeks before the first day of the month of issue.**

Hence the deadline for the **June** issue will be **15th April 1992.**

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Views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor.

# GREAT SCOTT RECORDS

## Concluding part by Chris Hamilton

### Addenda

After Great Scott Records ceased trading John Drummond sold off the equipment and none survives on site today.

John McIntosh, the Company's chief engineer, told me that many of the records survived for some years after the cessation of business but they were handed over to the appropriate agencies at the beginning of the last war to provide valuable shellac for use in the armaments industry. This means that the only records surviving today are those in private collections. Judging by the number I own and by the numbers I have seen and have been told about there are not too many around today. However I would like to have full details of any records in the possession of readers. This will help me to build up as complete a picture of the Great Scott Catalogue as is possible from this vantage point in time. A listing with as many details as I have been able to uncover is given at the end of this article.

As mentioned in the first part of this article Great Scott had two main types of label — one with a stroboscope and the earlier type without. I mentioned that the earlier type was of a salmon pink colour with dark blue printing. Since writing that I have come across another version of this type. Here the label is buff-coloured with dark brown printing.



(1) The earlier Great Scott Record label



(2) The autumn 1934 Great Scott label

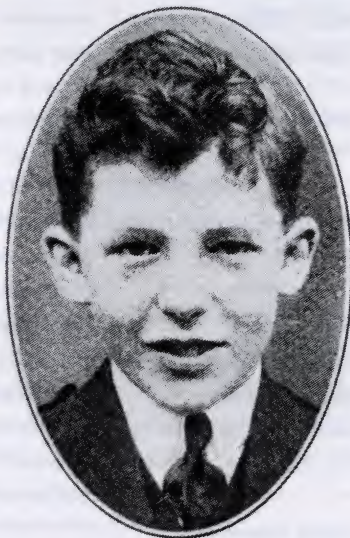
## LISTING OF GREAT SCOTT RECORDS:

### Catalogue

Number	Matrix No.	Artiste/s	Title
A 116		<b>Rita Masterton</b> (sop)	Cherry Ripe
		<b>David Malcolm</b> (bar)	Birds in The High-Hall Garden
A 124		<b>The Scottish Light Orchestra</b>	Dream Love Refrain
		<b>Eddie Conner &amp; His Band</b>	Soldiers' Song
A 125		<b>J. C. Lawrance</b> (Comedian)	The Waiter
		" " " "	The Isle of Man
A 132	A 132	<b>Professor Stoneley</b> (vln)	An Autumn Thought
		w. piano & violoncello	
A 130		<b>Professor Stoneley</b> (vln)	Romance
		w. <b>John P. Ross</b> (pno)	
A 134		<b>John Mathewson</b> (bar)	Border Ballad
		" "	Macgregor's Gathering
A 142	A 128	<b>J. C. Lawrance</b> (Comedian)	Lang, Lang Syne
	A 142	<b>Archibald Hardie</b> "	The Packman
A 154		<b>The Fayre Four</b> (Concertina)	Speak-Easy
		" " " "	Russian Fantasy
A 155	A154	<b>D. Taggart Stewart</b> (ten)	The Bonnie Braes o' Airlie
	A155	" " " "	A Dream
A 158		<b>Ernesto Jaconelli</b> (Accordion)	Mary of Argyle
		" "	Light Cavalry Overture
A 165		Piano Record	The Macgregor Patrol
		" "	Polly
A 175		<b>Eddie Conner &amp; His Band</b>	Reels & Strathspeys
A 180		<b>Jock McKendrick</b> (Comedian)	Meg o' Amulree
		" " " "	No The Real Mackay
A 183	A 183	<b>Hugh Campbell</b> (bar)	Wee Cooper o' Fife, Piper o' Dundee
	A 184	" " " "	Leezie Lindsay, Wee Hoosie by the Sea
A 193		<b>Mackenzie Reid</b> (Accordion)	Land of The Kilt
		" " " "	Lads of The Sporan
A 200		<b>Harry Smead &amp; His Band</b>	Don't Blame Me - Foxtrot
		" " " " "	The Fairy Masquerade
			(The Official Record for the new dance:
			The Hot-Step Rhythm Blues)



A 211		<b>Jock McKendrick (Comedian)</b>	Loch Lomond
		" " "	The Nice Wee Lass
A 213		" " "	I'll No' Bother
		" " "	Donal Macindo
A 221		<b>Harry Smead &amp; His Band</b>	The Last Round Up
		" " " " "	Love Birds - Foxtrot
A 224		<b>David Raitt (Accordion)</b>	American Medley, Bonny Ann
		" " "	Marquis of Huntly, Mason's Apron
A 226		<b>Hugh Campbell (bar)</b>	Gin I were a Baron's Heir
		" " "	Loch Lomond
A 230		" " "	Aye Waukin' O
		" " "	The Laird o' Cockpen
A 231		" " "	Jeanie's Bawbee, Forty Good Shillings
		" " "	Kirsty Forsyth
A 233		<b>Silver City Harmonica Band</b>	Hymn of Lourdes
	A 233	" " " "	Scots Selections
A 235	A 235	" " " "	American Medley
		" " " "	March, Strathspey & Reel



Fraser White the 13 year old winner of the Premier Prize at the March 1934 Perth Music Festival.

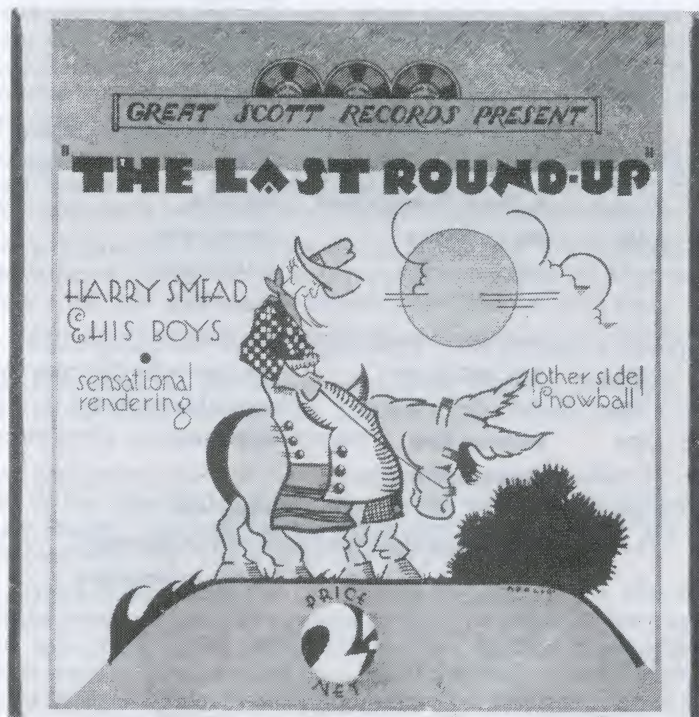
A 242		<b>Angus Fitchet (vln)</b>	Lass o' Bon Accord, Marquis of Huntly, Timour The Tartar
		<b>Great Scott Trio</b>	Eileen Alanah
A 244	A 245	<b>Arthur Lonie (ten)</b>	Bonnie Wee Thing
	A 244	" " "	The Lea Rig
A 246		<b>Stella A. Hannigan (sop)</b>	The Silver Ring
		" " " "	The Lass with The Delicate Air
A 247		" " " "	As I sit here
		" " " "	She Is Far From The Land
A 250		<b>Alexander Sinclair (bar)</b>	Hail Caledonia
		" " "	Green Grow The Rashes O
A 252		<b>Jack Lamond (Bass-bar)</b>	Myself When Young & The Sandwich Man
		" " "	Flow'r of Brittany & For You Alone
A 255	A 255	<b>Fraser White (treble)</b>	O For The Wings of a Dove
	A 256	" " "	How Beautiful Are The Feet
A 258		<b>Wullie Lindsay, Cissie Lang &amp; Co</b>	John's Perty
		" " " "	Beautiful Pay Night
A 260		<b>Wullie Lindsay (Comedian)</b>	Pride of The Family
		<b>Wullie Lindsay (Comedian)</b>	Underneath The Bed
A 262		<b>Cissie Lang (Irish Brogue)</b>	Patsy Burke
		" " " "	I'll Follow Ye Down to Carlo
A 264		<b>Archibald Hardie (Comedian)</b>	The Buxburn Shoppie Parts 1 & 2
A 266		" " "	Laddies at The School
		" " "	W.R.I.
A 268	A 270	<b>John Reid's Highland Orch.</b>	Waltz Country Dance
A 268		" " " "	Glasgow Highlanders
A 271		" " " "	Scottish Reform
		" " " "	Reel & Reel o' Tulloch
A 280		<b>Mackenzie Reid (Accordion)</b>	Mad Medley Parts 1 & 2
A 283	A 283	<b>Charles Rae (vln)</b>	White Heather Selections
	?	<b>John Reid's Highland Orch.</b>	Waltz Country Dance
A 297	A 297	<b>Col. Hutchison</b>	Mattinata
	A 298	" "	Gentlemen Rankers
		(Private Recording)	
A 305	A 306	<b>J. C. Menzies (ten)</b>	Afton Water
	A 305	" " " "	Maire my Girl



A 317	<b>Willie McCarron (Boy Sop)</b>	There's Something about Killamey
	" " " "	When The Roses Are Blooming in Ireland
A 319	" " " "	Bluebell
	" " " "	Take Me Hame To Bonnie Scotland
A 321	<b>Dundee Gaelic Choir</b>	Psalm 24, Tune: St.George's Edinburgh
	" " "	Paraphrase 65, Tune: Desert
A 323	" " "	Till, Till, Oigh Mo Ruin
	" " "	Mairi Mhin, Mheall-Shuileagh
A 325	" " "	Wae's Me for Prince Charlie
	" " "	O' a' The Airts
A 327	<b>Astorians Dance Band</b>	Sweet Sue - Quick Step
	" " "	Temptation - Foxtrot
A 329	" " "	The Harbour of Home Sweet Home - Waltz
	" " "	Who Walks in When I Walk Out ?
		Quick Step
A 334	<b>T. Alletson (Xylophone)</b>	
	with Orchestra	William Tell Selections Parts 1 & 2
A 340	<b>St.Margaret's Silver Band</b>	
	(Dundee)	The Cycle Parade
	" " " "	Highland Patrol
A 342	" " " "	The Fairy's Wedding
	" " " "	St.Margaret's from Bonnie Dundee
A 345	" " " "	The Jolly Miller
	" " " "	Two Comrades
A 347	<b>Royal Strathmore Orchestra</b>	
	A 347 <b>cond. Cecil A. Low</b>	Low: Sands of Sahara w. Johnny
		Beveridge (vcl)
	A 348 " " " "	Low & Scott: Solitude
A 351	<b>Kirk &amp; Ross</b>	Scottish Reform
	" " "	Dashing White Sergeant
A 353	" " "	Foursome Reel,
	" " "	Highland Schottische
A 360	A 359 <b>Alfred J. Forbes (ten)</b>	Scots Wha Hae
	(acc. by Henry	
	Hollingworth's Trio)	
	A 360 <b>Alfred J. Forbes (ten)</b>	Robin Tamson's Smiddy
	w. Mrs W.J. Davies (pno)	
A 364	" " " "	Ae Fond Kiss
	" " " "	The Bonnie Lass o' Ballochmyle

A 365		<b>A. H. McCall</b> (ten)	Kirkconnel Lea
		" " " "	Bonnie Galloway
A 368	A 368	<b>James G. Cameron</b> (bar)	McGregor's Gathering
	A 367	" " " "	Invictus
A 370		<b>Wm. Hartley's "Tiny Tots"</b>	
		<b>Orchestra</b>	The Sailor's Yarn
		" " " "	School Companions
A 372		" " " "	Melody Land Parts 1 & 2
A 375		<b>Neil Morrison</b> (ten)	The Bonnie Lass o' Ballochmyle
		" " " "	Ae Fond Kiss
A 380		<b>Silver City Harmonica Band</b>	Our Director
		" " " "	Savoy Irish Medley
A 382		" " " "	Naval Cadet
		" " " "	The 93rd Farewell
A 384		" " " "	Irish Selections
		" " " "	Scotch Selections
A 388		<b>George Hill</b> (ten)	My Love is Like a Red Red Rose
		" " " "	Scotland Yet
A 390		<b>J. A. H. Whiteley</b> (pno)	Old John Bradelum
		" " " "	The Egg
A 392		<b>Miss M. Mackie &amp; Charles Rae</b>	
		(vlns) <b>J.A.H.Whiteley</b> (pno)	Waverley Parts 1 & 2
A 394	A 395	<b>J. Mallabar Carrick</b> (bar)	Bonnie George Campbell
	A 394	" " " "	Until
		both acc. by "The Alice Trio"	
A 396	A 396	<b>Helen R. MacRae</b> (vln) &	Highland Selection: The Highland
		<b>Margaret Sinclair</b> (pno)	Wedding (March), Miss Drummond of
			Perth (Strathspey), The De'il among
			the Tailors ( & Variation) (Reel)
	A 397	<b>Margaret Sinclair</b> (pno)	A March, Strathspey & Reel Selection
A 402		<b>J. C. Menzies</b> (ten)	O' a' The Airts
		" " " "	Bonnie Wee Thing
A 406	A 406	<b>Perth &amp; District Prize Pipe</b>	79th Farewell, Caledonian Society,
		<b>Band</b>	Sandy Duff (March, Strathspey & Reel)
	A 407	" " " " "	Farewell to The Creeks, Because He Was
			a Bonnie Lad, Mackay's Reel (March,
			Strathspey & Reel)

A 408	Perth & District Prize Pipe				
A 408	Band				Bonnie Ann, Maggie Cameron, Duntrune (March, Strathspey & Reel)
A 409	"	"	"	"	Rowan Tree, Minstrel Boy, Badge of Scotland (Marches with seconds)
A 410	A 410	"	"	"	My Home, Pride of Scotland (Slow Marches)
A 411	"	"	"	"	Highland Rory, Marquis of Huntly, Kate Dalrymple (March, Strathspey & Reel)
A 412	<b>Alex Henderson (vln), Alex Innes (tin whistle) &amp; Edith Aitken (pno)</b>				Stracathro St.Kilda
	"	"	"	"	



An early Great Scott Sleeve



A 414	A 414	<b>Alex R. Henderson</b> (vln) & <b>Edith Aitken</b> (pno)	Niel Gow's Lamentation for James Moray of Abercainey
	A 415	" " " "	The Braes o' Auchtertyre, Miller o' Drone, Speed The Plough
A 416	A 416	<b>Alex R. Henderson</b> (vln) & <b>Edith Walker</b> (pno)	Pastoral Air: Fyvie Castle (by J. Scott Skinner)
	A 417	" " " "	Pipe Marches: Lochaber Gathering, The Athol Highlanders' Farewell to Loch Katrine
A 418	A 418	<b>Alex Innes &amp; His Tin Whistle</b> w. <b>Edith Aitken</b> (pno)	Scottish Selection: Road to The Isles Keel Row, Kate Dalrymple
	A 419	" " " "	Scottish Selection: Cock o' The North Hielan' Laddie, The Wind That Shakes the Barley
A 421		<b>Angus Morrison</b> (ten)	Silent Worship
		" " "	Serenata
A 423		" " "	O Open The Door
		" " "	Jessie, The Flower o' Dunblane
A 425		<b>Swanson &amp; Yaw</b> (Comedians) w. <b>Tommy Neilson's Band</b>	At the Launch of The Cunarder Descriptive
A 476	A 476	<b>Jas. Donaldson</b> (button accordion)	Adeste Fideles La Marseillaise
	A 477	" "	Cuckoo Waltz
		(both sides unissued - test pressing viewed)	
A 508	A 508	<b>A. H. McCall</b> (ten)	Little Town in The Old County Down
	A 509	" " " "	We're a' Scottish Here
A 524	A 524	<b>McKenzie Reid</b> (piano accordion)	Broon's Reel
	A 525	" "	Rory O'More
A 556	?	<b>James Halkerston</b> (Harmonica)	Harmonica Selections 1
	?	" " "	Harmonica Selections 2

# **RECORDS IN STORE by Frank Andrews**

Being a fuller version of the programme presented  
at the August 1990 Society Meeting in Neasden

## **Part IV**

### **SELFRIDGE LIMITED - SELFRIDGE'S CROWN PERFECT RECORDS**

Henry Gordon Selfridge was born in Ripon, Wisconsin, U.S.A. When 26 years of age he became a partner in a Chicago business called Messrs. Field & Co. After only thirteen years in business he retired in 1903 at the early age of 39.

He came to Britain and in 1909 founded one of London's most famous department stores, Selfridges of Oxford Street, London W1.

When the English branch of the Columbia Phonograph Co., Gen'l. launched its double-side recorded disc records on a permanent basis in October 1907, it continued to offer its current single-sided recorded stock and newly recorded titles for another two years and more before abandoning the format for standard repertoire recordings during 1910. Either, at that time, or earlier in 1909, Selfridges took Columbia's deleted single-face stock and stuck a black and gold label called Selfridge's Crown Perfect Record over the Columbia label. This label had a portion cut away in order that just the title and the composer/s name/s from the label underneath were visible. The discs' numbers were only recognisable through the matrix numbers "in the wax" in the labels' surrounds. These numbers also acted as Columbia's own catalogue numbers.

No double-sided discs are known to have been issued with these stuck-on labels nor has the label been found on any other make of disc extant in 1909/10. Full details of any known records and a description of a Selfridge's sleeve will be welcome.

{Columbia Graphophone Record 284 (an old Climax title) "The Admiral's Favourite" had a Selfridge's Crown Perfect Record stuck-on label, was played. An American re-recording by Columbia in the USA of Climax 284 played by the Columbia Band.}

### **SELFRIDGE'S ANNIVERSARY "GIVE-AWAY RECORDS"**

For the 17th, 18th and 25th anniversaries of its founding, Selfridges Ltd. had records pressed to be given away to their customers (presumably over a short period and dependent on the value of their purchases?).

The first anniversary celebrated in this manner was the 17th when 5½" diameter records pressed by the Universal Music Co. Ltd. with red labels printed in black and gold called "Vocalion Record". This was a single-sided record with Don Parker and His Band playing "She Showed Him This". The reverse bore the anniversary legend.

The Columbia Graphophone Co. Ltd. pressed the discs for the 18th anniversary. They were made in the 10" size with two recordings by Tony Lowry's Band specially recorded, one title appropriately called "Sweet Eighteen" - a selection of well-known British songs. The label was in Columbia's light blue, printed in silver. The full name given to it was "Selfridge Souvenir Record" - with compliments from Selfridge's. It was given the number SBR 1. The reverse side with "The Good Fellowship March" had been specially composed for "Selfridge's 18th Birthday Week". A special record bag, given a string carrying handle,



was also printed with the same message.

For its 25th anniversary, Selfridge's turned to Columbia's subsidiary, The Parlophone Co. Ltd. The standard dark blue and gold Parlophone label was used on the discs pressed but, in lieu of a catalogue number were the words "Not For Sale" and below the artists' credits was printed "A Souvenir of the 21st Birthday of SELFRIDGE'S. Both titles on this 10" disc were from the Parlophone Co.'s catalogue.

A description of the Vocalion Record sleeve and the Parlophone would be welcome.

### **SELFRIDGE LIMITED with SILVERTONE RECORDS**

The Silvertone Records were of 8" diameter and pressed by The British Homophone Co. Ltd. at its Stonebridge Park factory from its Plaza label's matrices, which were current in 1933. The records, as the label states, were chosen by Christopher Stone for Selfridges, he being a very popular presenter of gramophone records and radio programmes broadcast by The British Broadcasting Corporation. The labels were light blue with silver printing, had stroboscopic edges and had serial numbers starting at S 1. The matrix numbers were prefixed "L" as used on British Homophone's 8" discs.

("Stormy Weather" on Silvertone S 3 was played at Neasden. The artist credit was The Silvertone Dance Band, which was the Plaza Dance Band on the Plaza issue. This was pseudonym for Charles "Nat" Star and his Band. Sam Browne was the anonymous vocalist. It was recorded on 23rd May 1933.)

### **SELFRIDGE LIMITED with "KEY" RECORDS**

"Key" Records, with white labels printed in green and black were 10" in diameter. Like the Silvertones the repertoire had been chosen by Christopher Stone, as the labels state, from The Decca record Co. Ltd.'s matrices in use with its Panachord and recently acquired Edison Bell Winner Records, (those with the black labels printed in gold - the W pre-fixed series). The key shown in the label incorporates the Selfridge "S" symbol in the finger-grip; this key had an actual existence as a ceremonial key which unlocked the main front doors of the Selfridge building on its opening day. The discs were given an S 600 catalogue series with artists under pseudonyms. The record bags showed both the extent of the Selfridge stores and a portrait of Christopher Stone.

{Frank Cuddy singing "Don't be Late in the Morning" from S 600 was played at Neasden. He was actually the Variety comedian Randolph Sutton from Panachord 25535, recorded on 20th May 1933.}

Both the "Key" and Silvertone records could not have been on sale for much more than a year, (perhaps even less?).

### **F. W. WOOLWORTH & CO. LTD. with THE LITTLE MARVEL RECORDS**

Frank W. Woolworth was the founder of the chain stores well known in both the U.S.A. and the U.K. The business was begun in 1879, in America, and a policy was quickly adopted of selling its merchandise with a 5 cents or a 10 cents price tag, Americans referring to their stores as "The five and ten cents" stores whereas we in Britain would say Woolworth's or latterly "Woollies". In the summer of 1905 Woolworth's in America opened some talking machine establishments in New York City, Atlantic City and Philadelphia,



under the proprietary name of The Musical Echo Company.

Frank Woolworth had visited Britain in 1900 to assess the possibility of establishing stores, similar to those in America, in our major cities. As a result in 1905, on Guy Fawke's Day the first "Woolworth's Fancy Bazaar" was opened in Liverpool. The store was patronised by 60,000 people during its first two days of trading.

"Nothing Over Sixpence" (2½p) became one of the most famous trading slogans in Britain, but I am not aware that the restriction went into operation at the opening of the first store. Marks and Spencer were then operating their "Penny Bazaars".

By October 1912 Woolworth's were in London with stores at 2, Atlantic Road, Brixton, SW, near the Brixton Road; at Hare Street in Woolwich SE; in Rye Lane, Peckham. In 1913 another was opened in Lewisham High Street. By October 1913 the head office was located at Central House in the Kingsway, London WC.

The Woolworth stores became an outlet for the single-sided 5½" The Mimosa Records of the Sound Recording Co. at a time when 10" and 12" discs were at their highest ever prices in Britain. The Mimosa Records date from late 1921 but are not thought to have been exclusive to F. W. Woolworth & Co. who sold them for 6d each.

When record prices were reduced at the start of the 1923/1924 season, it was then possible to produce small double-sided discs to sell at 6d each, and Woolworths were able to have "The Little Marvel Record" pressed for their exclusive use, by the Universal Music Co. Ltd. for recordings undertaken by the Aeolian Co., and from 1925, by the Vocalion Gramophone Co.

Neither the name nor the label were registered as a trade mark although the label did carry a large "W" in the upper half of the label indicating Woolworth's proprietorship in the disc. The first labels were printed in blue and black on a white paper; later green was added across the centre and around the edge. The smaller records were without coupling numbers, the two record numbers (matrix numbers) were generally prefixed with a "C" or an "F". The 6" size was given a coupling number (998 is the lowest known). Between 1060 and 1070 some electrically recorded sides began to be issued made by the Marconi system, licensed to the Vocalion Gramophone Co. (These are denoted by the "M" symbol within a circle.) All from 1070 onwards were electrically recorded on both sides, having a prefixed "S" and a suffix "E" 2000 matrix series. The Little Marvels with orange and white labels, printed in black and blue, and put into a 300 coupling series, were Nursery Rhymes and other children's repertoire discs.

The repertoire on The Little Marvel appears to have been recorded primarily for the Woolworth's chain stores, although that is not to say that the matrices were not used by their proprietors to press other small discs, under other labels, for contracting customers.

As the Aeolian and Vocalion companies do not appear to have sold any contemporary discs under their own labels, pressed from Little Marvel matrices, the Woolworth's repertoire was probably the first of any stores labels not to have been drawn on another company's contemporary catalogue for its own issues, a policy which Woolworth's continued with its later and differently labelled discs.

In the smaller sized Little Marvels, the "C" and "F" prefixed numbers had their own series, the highest known to me being F 296 and C 5619. In the larger size no. 1179 is the highest I know bearing a title which was being recorded in February/March 1928.

{The Little Marvel 310A "Cock Robin", from the Nursery series, was played at Neasden.}

When the Vocalion Gramophone Co. introduced its Broadcast Junior 6" records in February 1929, some of the titles were pressings of non-copyright material which had appeared on The Little Marvel's "B" sides.

### **THE CONQUEST 6" DIAMETER RECORD**

Only one example of this disc is known, viz. 2001-C/2001-D. It was recorded and manufactured by The Gramophone Co. Ltd. and was pressed from matrices which were recorded and manufactured for The British Homophone Co. Ltd. under contract. British Homophone's labels, pressed from the matrices, which had been given "EE" matrices, were the Homo Baby and Sterno Baby, although two other labels are known, pressed for British Homophone contracting customers, which were The Jolly Boys and DIXY labels.

The Gramophone Co. Ltd. had gone over to electrical recording in 1925, but the contract with the British Homophone did not commence until February 1926. The Conquest's "brown card" states "for Woolworth's", which is the only supporting evidence. Obviously something intervened to prevent a production run of The Conquest discs which would have been Woolworth's first electrical recordings. Instead The Little Marvels took that honour some time later.

### **VICTORY - THE VICTORY - "THE VICTORY" - 7" diameter 1928-1931**

Especially recorded for F. W. Woolworth & Co. Ltd. by The Crystalate Gramophone Mfg. Co. Ltd. (successors to The Crystalate Mfg. Co. Ltd.), the Victory discs with the above mentioned various name-styles were first offered for sale for the new season in the autumn of 1928. The contract for the then electrically recorded The Little Marvels was terminated. At first, the electrically recorded Victories had yellow labels printed in red, brown and black. As Victory, the name was printed on a ribbon below an oval cartouche depicting Lord Nelson's flagship HMS Victory. As The Victory, the name, still on a ribbon, curved round the upper part of the label. There was no depiction of HMS Victory. I am unable to say which was the first type of label.

The "Victory" label had its name printed horizontally above the spindle hole below a depiction of the ship which had, to right and left, what looks like red oak leaves and acorns. British wooden warships were supposed to be made of "Heart of Oak"! The Victory 10" record, of pre Great War 1914 vintage, also depicted Nelson's flagship on its label which was protected by two registered trade marks of Blumb & Co. Ltd. who went out of business during that war. The trade marks were then acquired by The Columbia Graphophone Co. Ltd. The Crystalate business had to purchase these from Columbia before it could begin to supply its own Victory records to Woolworth's. Crystalate subsequently registered a third Victory trade mark. None of the marks ever belonged to Woolworth's who operated a sole licence to sell Victory records in Britain.

Later issues of "The Victory" label are found printed in blue, black and red on yellow paper, and in violet black and red on a pale blue label. Catalogue numbers ran from 1 to 324 - the last in February 1931. A nursery series was sold, the discs given letters in lieu of numbers which ran from A to V. As "The Victory" they had blue labels printed in black.

Another label styled THE VICTORY LABEL FOR THE KIDDIES one assumes was sold by Woolworth's as those discs, too, were of 7" diameter and also showed HMS Victory. The



labels were printed blue and black on a pink paper and all appear to have been pressed by Crystalate from imported matrices from the U.S.A.'s "Little Tots" label. The ship was shown in a rectangular cartouche at the top of the label, printed in black. The catalogue numbers duplicated those already in use on standard discs. (I am indebted to Arthur Badrock for all the details concerning this label.)

William Ditcham was Crystalate's recording expert and the initials "DC" in his well-known florid handwriting is found on many of the discs, which may imply "Ditcham-Crystalate". The "DC" usually prefixes the matrix numbers.

{Victory 210 "Someone" from "The Girl from Woolworth's" sung by G. Jack (Jack Plant) was played at Neasden.}

## **ECLIPSE 8" 1931-1935**

### **(including WHAT YOUR BIRTHDAY FORETELLS)**

Woolworth's chain of stores began selling the Eclipse records in April 1931, the first labels being printed in gold and black on scarlet paper showing a partial eclipse to the right of the label. The design of the label never altered but the black printing was dispensed with quite early on. Conrad Dewey had the registered trademark "Eclipse" for gramophones from March 1913. As with Victory records, the succeeding Eclipse discs repertoire was especially recorded for Woolworth's by the Crystalate Gramophone Record Mfg. Co. Ltd., and pressed at their Kent works. After only three months it was acquired by The Shaftesbury Cabinet Co. It was removed from the register in January 1927 just in time for the Crystalate Mfg. Co. Ltd. to apply again for the word to be re-registered in July 1927. There must have been difficulty with the application as the mark was not granted until May 1928, by which time the Crystalate business had changed its name to The Crystalate Gramophone Record Mfg. Co. Ltd. The trade mark today belongs to the Decca Record Co. Ltd.

Eclipses began at no.1 and progressed to 1011. A blue and gold labelled series was used for less popular repertoire and these were numbered from SC.1 to SC.158. The "What Your Birthday Foretells" discs (birthdays from January to December) were issued only with a matrix number, prefixed "JW". It is believed that these initials, also found on the earlier Eclipses (both "in the wax" and on the labels, later on the labels only, and then dispensed with altogether), were those of Jay Wilbur who had joined Crystalate as a musical director in June 1930, after the collapse of Dominion Records where he had held a similar position. The Horoscope Eclipses had their own particular labels, on a blue background, as did the Nursery series which bore yellow labels edged with orange depicting three pixies as performing musicians and two children. Printing was in black and blue. A special label with silver printing denoted the Silver Jubilee of King George V's reign.

The ECLIPSE RECORDS of 10" diameter with scarlet and gold labels had no connection with the Crystalate/Woolworth's Eclipses, and were of pre-Great War vintage and were pressed abroad.

{Played at Neasden were the Famous Cresswell Colliery Band in part 2 of a "Communityland Selection" on SC.101 and Jimmy Carlton (Harry Fay) in Leslie Stuart's "Lily of Laguna" on SC.1270.}

**To be continued**



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Records...Displays...Competitions...

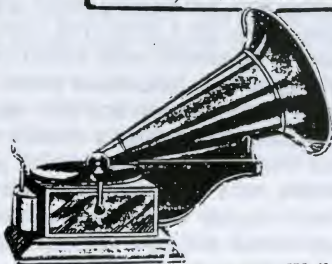


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# SPRING IS IN THE AIR

by Mike Field

The mainspring is both one of the most important and possibly the most fallible component in the phonograph or gramophone. Years of development made this component fairly reliable during the heyday of the "wind-up gramophone" but machines in use today may still use the original spring. It is hardly surprising therefore that breakage is not uncommon and the event can be a heart-stopping moment for the collector.

There are very few manufacturers in the UK who still make gramophone mainsprings. One of these is George Emmott (Pawsons) Ltd. an old established business set up in 1840 as a spindle and top manufacturer to supply the Yorkshire textile industry. Located in the small village of Oxenhope in West Yorkshire, the factory, known as Wadsworth Mill (although it was never used as such), today comprises the buildings shown in the photograph on page 18. The centre building is the original workshop, where whole families worked "in the mill" when the Company was (and still is) the main employer in the village.

There are no records surviving but it seems likely that Emmotts started producing gramophone springs in the very early 1900s. However it was the mass production of affordable clocks and gramophones in the "Roaring Twenties" and the more muted Thirties that provided a burgeoning market for the Company's products. Edward Pawsons and Charles Arthur Pawsons - trading at that time as "George Emmott" first applied for the "EMO" trademark in 1919 and springs were marketed mainly under that brand name although other names were in use, e.g. "John Bull". However mainsprings were not the only product associated with gramophones. Other lines included governor springs and screws, check springs (to prevent the winding shaft slipping back), soundbox needle bar springs and screws, needles and lubricants. In a further extension Emmotts were assembling "Collaro" B.30 double-spring gramophone motors complete with turntable and base plate in the mid-thirties. An example is still preserved in a glass display case in the manager's office.

Emmott's methods of making mainsprings have not changed substantially over the years. In essence a hardened and tempered steel strip of the required dimensions is annealed to soften the material at both ends. Holes are punched in the ends and the inner coil is partly formed. The strip is then laid out on a long bench and the preformed inner attached to an hooked arbor in the centre of a substantial steel disc which can be rotated. A metal catch with a hooked end is positioned on the disc so that the outer coil of the finished spring will be the required outer dimension. The operator places the inner and outer ends over the corresponding hooks and momentarily grips the inner end to the arbor with a pair of pliers to ensure that the hook catches. The disc is then rotated while the operator holds down the quickly moving strip until it is fully coiled. At this point a slipping clutch ensures that no more tension is applied and a restraining coil of wire is fitted over the finished spring. Originally the disc was rotated by hand but progress now dictates an electric motor!

Only in one respect has the manufacturing process changed radically. Originally the spring steel strip was bought in a soft condition and the all important process of hardening and tempering the metal was carried out at the works. This was a highly skilled operation which had to be mastered over several years. It required physical strength, dexterity and a



colour trained eye. A mistake in judging the correct tempering colour would result in a spring that was too brittle or too soft. Either way the spring would have been unsatisfactory. Later as it became possible to obtain correctly hardened and tempered spring steel strips with "dressed" edges direct from the steel mills it was no longer necessary to carry out the process in-house.

The need to dress the edges of the strip is important. Sheared strip under magnification shows that the edges are rough with minute cracks which can form a stress point leading eventually to a fracture. Hence the need to dress the edges to remove the roughness. While such material is now more difficult to obtain, Emmotts were far-sighted enough to lay in a large stock of material but supply problems are bound arise eventually. When and if that time comes it may be the end of special-order gramophone springs. But at the moment Emmotts can and do make springs to order. Early catalogues provide the data to identify the correct spring for a given machine and in some cases stocks of these springs are still held.

As information on the subject of replacing springs is available in past issues of "Hillandale News" and some of the more recent books it will not be repeated here. Suffice to say that, in most cases (loop- and hook-ended springs excluded), the process usually entails releasing the new spring from its restraining wire or clamp and "winding" it into the barrel.

Winding in springs (or taking old ones out) can be a daunting task, particularly if the spring is large and powerful. Like holding a tiger by the tail it is impossible to let go until the operation is complete. So for those of faint heart or with no facilities it would be better to send the barrel to an appropriate repairer. Emmotts do occasionally receive a barrel with a request to fit a new spring and although they will usually oblige it is clearly not something they would encourage.

Although the supply of gramophone springs is now a relatively small part of Emmott's business, it is a great comfort to know that there is a source for the "wind-up enthusiasts". Whether you use the source directly or through a specialist supplier is up to you but we all have reason to be thankful for the existence of George Emmott (Pawsons) Ltd. Long may they prosper!



Wadsworth Mill, Oxenhope - The home of George Emmott (Pawsons) Ltd.



# REVIEWS

## THE NORWEGIAN

### "AL" PREFIXED 10"

#### (Popular Series) DISCOGRAPHY

by Tom Valle and Arild Bratteland

This new discography is about 140 pages thick, and the reason why I think this is worth bringing to the notice of the bulk of our membership, other than any Norwegian or Scandinavian members we have among us, is the fair amount of American and British artists (or artists issued on British EMI labels) which it contains.

The catalogue is set out in numerical order, starting at AL 2000 with two May 1927 recordings and ends at AL 2799, the last recordings being of November 1942, when Norway was under German occupation. Additionally there are three other short lists, in Norwegian Regal-Zonophone (11 discs in the MR 11000 series). Seven discs are listed in a Zonophone JN/ZN series and eleven discs in a Regal RN series. Also eight discs of the popular Norwegian singing star, Kirsten Heiberg, are listed, issued between 1938 and 1943 on the Electrola labels, in the EG series.

Four pages of explanatory and historical data, in Norwegian, are followed by a condensed page and a bit in English translation. Record labels, advertisements, photographs and accounts of Grammophonkonzerts are dispersed throughout.

Obviously the bulk of the recordings were made in Scandinavia and my breakdown shows that 700 sides were recorded in Oslo, 154 in Copenhagen and 162 in Stockholm. Outside of 48 sides recorded in Berlin there were also Berlin recordings of Will Glahe and His Orchestra (40 sides), Marek Weber and His Orchestra (16 sides) and Barnabas von Geczy and His Orchestra

on 37 sides, some of which were London recordings.

Most of the Victor recordings were issued also on the British HMV lists but at least one side was not. There are 27 Dance, Swing, or Jazz band sides in the catalogue, the most prolific being Benny Goodman with 29, Artie Shaw with 23, Tommy Dorsey with 24, Fats Waller with 11. Among the other famous names are Ellington, Red Nichols, Red McKenzie, Kemp, Hampton, Hawkins, Rudy Vallee, Eddie Duchin, Glenn Miller, Guy Lombardo (with 10 sides). Other Victor artists are Sousa's band, Boston Promenade Orchestra, The Hilo Hawaiians, Frosini and Diero, the accordionists, Ginger Rogers, Giulietta Morino, violinist and a few Victor "in-house" orchestras as well.

From London, there were also 14 sides from "in-house" combinations and 15 British dance bands with Jack Hylton having 36 sides, Roy Fox 20 sides, Jack Harris 18 sides, Ronnie Munro 13, Henry Jacques 14 and Geraldo 10 sides. Also featured in the catalogue are the Coldstream Guards and Royal Marines Bands, the Black Dyke Mills and Callender's Senior Brass Bands, cinema organists B. Pagan, Reginald Foort and Al Bollington are there and in light instrumental fare are Forsythe and Young (pianos), Louis Levy and His Orchestra, Peter Yorke and His Orchestra, Alfredo Campoli and orchestra and The Comedian Harmonists among others.

There are no EMI or Victor recordings in the three short lists mentioned. Matrix numbers, with takes, dates of recording and location are given extensively, where known, with original issue sources as a bonus. The only two things missing concerning the list itself are the issue dates and the fact that none of the catalogue numbers have been prefixed "AL" — not even at the top of each page, which usually give details of eight or nine discs.

Distinctly legible, this catalogue can well

provide collectors with alternative issues of recordings which they may wish to possess and could advertise for.

A comprehensive artist index is included.

The discography is obtainable by sending 160 Norwegian Kroner (or its equivalent, I suppose) to Postal Giro Account, Oslo 3 60 41 13, Norske Diskografier, Oslo, Norway. The price includes postage for surface mail to any part of the world.

**Frank Andrews**

## **THE LOST VOICE of QUEEN VICTORIA by Paul Tritton**

### **Review 1**

Not everyone can have the joy of being a parent, but there are many who can share in the happiness of the new parenthood of another! I fall into this second category, because although I played no part in its conception or development, I like to think that I helped in a roundabout way to tell the world — or at least part of it — about this new arrival. To explain: the author, Paul Tritton, lives near Maidstone and I am BBC Radio Kent's district producer for the Maidstone sub studio which is also part of the worldwide interconnecting network of studios. As the sole member of staff of this massive sector of the British Broadcasting Corporation it fell to me on a number of occasions to welcome Paul Tritton into my little studio in County Hall in Maidstone, and to facilitate his connection with interviews on Radio Four's science programme, the BBC World Service, BBC Cambridgeshire and so forth. And what a fascinating tale he has to tell.

To continue the analogy of parenthood, the book had an exceptionally long gestation period — something like eleven years. As Paul Tritton explains in his introduction, the book developed from an assignment he was given in 1980 while working as a freelance writer on the house journal of Rolls-Royce

Motors. He became particularly interested in Yorkshireman Henry Edmunds, the man who introduced Rolls to Royce and thereby helped to create a legend in engineering and motorcars. Paul Tritton produced an article for the Rolls-Royce journal on Edmunds, but was so fascinated by the man that he decided to continue his research and write a full-length book about this amazing man.

One particular part of Henry Edmunds' story sparked off the investigative side of Paul Tritton's journalistic nature: it was the claim by Edmunds that Queen Victoria had asked him to demonstrate the Bell-Tainter Graphophone to her and that on his behalf, one of his associates, solicitor Sydney Morse, went to Balmoral in the autumn of 1888 and recorded the Queen's voice.

We know about the Queen's recording some ten years later for the Emperor Menelik of Abyssinia. This was made on an Edison machine and it appears that the Queen's instructions were followed and the cylinder was destroyed after being played to the Emperor. The loss of this recording and that of a Colonel Gouraud cylinder of Edward VII, seemed to leave the HMV 1923 record of King George V and Queen Mary (RE 284) as the earliest surviving British royal recording. But if we are to draw the obvious conclusion from Mr Tritton's book, history will have to be re-written. For after a ten-year search, a cylinder has been unearthed which certainly carries a recording; it is a recording of a woman's voice and an apparently cultured, almost regal voice. However, Mr Tritton carefully avoids stating the cylinder which has been found, IS that of Queen Victoria. A lot more will have to be deciphered — at the moment only a few words are audible through the mush of surface noise — and that is even after the best attentions of some of the world's leading experts on acoustics, using the most sophisticated equipment available. And even if all the words ARE deciphered,



can we then be sure that the voice is that of the Queen-Empress herself? Somehow I doubt it. But it's a fascinating business and a jolly good detective story, told by a man who has thoroughly researched his subject.

The book starts with a history of sound recording and of Henry Edmund's part in its introduction to Britain. The various recording systems of tin-foil phonographs, wax cylinders and wax-coated cylinders are covered in some detail together with the story of Sydney Morse's trip to Balmoral with Edmund's Graphophone. Paul Tritton then tells of his hunt for the long-lost cylinder, its discovery in the Science Museum and of his fight to have the cylinder played. There is then the nail-biting narrative of the session when the fragile hundred-year-old cylinder was played for the first time in some sixty years.

For members of the City of London Phonograph and Gramophone Society, the book received the ultimate stamp of approval from no less an authority than our President George Frow, who pays a warm tribute to the persistence and tenacity of the author in achieving his goal: the playing of the cylinder which would carry the voice of the woman who was — in George Frow's words — "the most famous nineteenth-century Briton".

I have to say that certain passages in Paul Tritton's book seemed familiar, and sure enough, in my back numbers of "The Hillandale News" I found an article by Frank Andrews (No.128, October 1982, pp.92-97) based on Paul Tritton's research which, by that time, had led him as far as the discovery of the cylinder. The article includes the following prophetic passage: "The presence of grooves on the cylinder certainly indicates that someone at some time attempted at least to make a recording or recordings on it..." Ten years of effort by Mr Tritton and the development of the CEDAR system have proved that to be so.

"The Lost Voice of Queen Victoria" is a particularly interesting book for those of us who have a fascination with the very earliest recordings and marvel how we can still hear the voices of those who were born in the early years of the nineteenth century. Queen Victoria was born in 1819: her father was the Duke of Kent, brother of King William the Fourth, whom she succeeded in 1837. He was born in 1765 and her grandfather, George III, who died a year after Victoria was born, was himself born in 1738. So if that scratchy relic on a Graphophone cylinder is the voice of Victoria, we have a direct link back to the first half of the eighteenth century.

But enough of this conjecture. Can I suggest that you, dear reader, decide for yourself whether we really do have the voice of Queen Victoria, by reading for yourself "The Lost Voice of Queen Victoria - the search for the First Royal Recording" by Paul Tritton, published by Academy Books at £11.95.

Colin Johnson

## Review 2

In November of last year I was delighted to read about in the Press and see and hear on television the realisation of what might be the voice of Queen Victoria coming off a Graphophone cylinder recording of 1888.

I was equally delighted at the promise of a book by Paul Tritton chronicling his search for and the re-recording of the material on the cylinder. With this book now to hand I have not been disappointed. It's a slim volume of some one hundred and forty-three pages, well illustrated and with a foreword by our Society's President George Frow.

Paul Tritton re-tells the discovery of sound recording, of Henry Edmunds, an Englishman present at the very moment when Edison voiced his famous test words, and of Sydney Morse, a London solicitor who



actually recorded the old Queen. Paul Tritton is to be commended in the highest for the quality and depth of his research. It's a great story. I would only query the validity of the audio memory he quotes of those who actually heard the great Queen.

With that said, my greatest admiration for Paul Tritton stems from the frankness with which he reveals how the sound material on the cylinder was realised - and all honour to him for it.

Even allowing for the fact that the replay machinery used by the National Sound Archive is hardly "state of the art", lacking as it does both facilities and sophistication, I was horrified to read on page ninety-three of the book that during the transcription process "the styluses dislodged small particles of ozokerite" from the surface of the cylinder. That this removal of material was from grooves barely discernible compounds what was done.

I find it incredible that in these days of such advanced conservation techniques, an artefact, such as this Graphophone cylinder certainly is, should have been treated in such a cavalier fashion. Why on earth was not the first consideration of Peter Copeland - Conservation Manager of the National Sound Archive - that the cylinder be sent to a laboratory in Japan to have the sounds in the cylinder grooves read by a laser scanner, not implemented? Since there is no physical contact with the system whether it was successful or not, the cylinder would not have been irreparably damaged in the way so graphically described by Paul. Cannot the word go out that artefacts such as this Graphophone cylinder be accorded as much care and consideration as say a pipe roll of Richard II or a Rosetta stone?

So, full marks to Paul Tritton for his research and detective work in producing such a frank and fine book. No thanks, though, to the National Sound Archive for allowing a valuable, and perhaps unique

cylinder recording be damaged on a number of occasions before its very eyes.

Joe Pengelly

## THE COMPLETE REGAL CATALOGUE

February 1914 to December 1932

For years Frank Andrews and Arthur Badrock have been brewing up this enormous listing and publication has only become possible through the setting up of the print by the indefatigable Ted Cunningham. All followers of the 78 should bend a graceful knee to these three as their labours will give hours of pleasurable relaxation; hours, yes - it has 350 pages or so, plus introductory material.

Regal of course was Columbia's cheaper supporting label, and this publication complements Frank Andrews' earlier listing of Columbia 10" records from 1904 to 1930. This catalogue is still available through the Society.

An obvious reason for the early Regal records appears to have been as a British outlet for the Columbias of American origin, but with the national spirit stirring in 1914 a large number of bands and patriotic material came to be published early on, and were bread and butter to Regal for long after.

As with the Columbias, popular acoustic recordings came to be made over by the electrical process after 1925, sometimes twice, and occasionally with the sides newly paired. Regal maintained a strong catalogue until 1932 when it was combined with Zonophone and many earlier records of both companies stayed available into the 1950s as Regal-Zonophone. The layout is excellent, with catalogue numbers in sequence; matrix numbers, deletion dates, performers, titles and composers are all there, and the issues are presented as Monthly Supplements with additional War,

Regional and Salvation Army headings. The John McCormack and 12" records are found at the back alongside a well-arranged index. There are label illustrations in monochrome, and two pages are given over to label and cover descriptions.

Andrews and Badrock have gone to some trouble to uncover as many pseudonyms as they can, and it would not be fair to detail these here, but the reader will be in for many surprises. One name that is scattered over the pages is W. S. (Stan) Greening whose orchestras made several hundred Regal records. Until his appearance here his name was hardly known to many collectors, but what a useful fellow he must have been to Regal! He looked after the dance and lighter music catalogue while Ketelbey and Raybould busied themselves with more serious items. It may come as a surprise to some that a few classical records were made by the B.B.C. Wireless and Bournemouth Municipal orchestras. In another area the Society's honorary member Cavan O'Connor recorded under several names on 57 Regals and no doubt as 'vocal refrain' on much more for Regal. The company made sure that dance music was well represented and through the liberal employment of Music Hall artists on the Regal label we can listen to many creators' performances.

Space dictates that only a taste of what is here can be given, but all you ever want to know about the three sizes of Regal is listed in these pages; this is a reference book that no 78 collection should be without. Compilers: thank you, it is really first-class.

**George Frow**

{Obtainable from C.L.P.G.S. Booklist, 24, Washington Street, BRIGHTON BN2 2SR, United Kingdom. Size A4, soft covers, 370 pages, price £26.00 post free.}

### **Coming in future issues:**

There are plenty of "goodies" in store for our readers. These include a brief article on a Bettini disc; Victor's early operatic records; the conclusion of Records in Store; an article on "The Award for the best Gramophone"; a brief biography of a Welsh soprano of renown and several reviews including one of a novel service that may be of use to collectors.

**Editor**

## **Forthcoming Meetings in London**

London Meetings are held at The National Sound Archive, 29 Exhibition Road, Kensington on the third Thursday evening of the month at 6.45pm prompt (unless stated otherwise).

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>April 23rd:</b> | "Your very own...Music Hall & Variety on film" presented by George Frow and Len Watts |
| <b>May 21st:</b>   | "Old records, new music" presented by Peter Adamson                                   |
| <b>June 18th:</b>  | "A chip off the old block" — Music Hall Families presented by Rick Hardy              |



## LETTERS

### Electrophone

Dear Editor,

In answer to Bill Dean-Myatt's query on the Electrophone. The Electrophone was registered at Stationers Hall copyrighting department on April 18th 1899.

The Electrophone was the invention of the French scientist M. C. Ader. It was an electrical high-tension sound transmitter intended to be employed for conversational purposes through submarine electric cables. It was more commonly adopted in its application to an ordinary telephone service for listening in to concerts, theatrical performances or public speeches, which were being performed in various distant venues. Those with telephones at the turn of the century, and after, could be connected with the Electrophone's own exchange and in turn be connected to those theatres etc. which had joined the scheme. The transmitters were usually in sets of four placed near the stage or platform footlights, or in front of the actual performers such as public speakers.

In America, a company operating this system was called The Long Distance Company. In Paris, the Theatrephone Company operated the system, where it cost one franc to listen for ten minutes in the hotels and restaurants where the facility was installed. Telephone subscribers in London and Brussels were enabled to connect with the French system. I cannot here go into how the whole thing operated. At one juncture up to fifteen different venues were "on tap" in the French service, which was in use as early as 1893.

I doubt if a phonograph or gramophone was used as a sound source, although it was technically feasible.

Yours sincerely, Frank Andrews, Neasden

Dear Sir,

With reference to Bill Dean-Myatt's letter concerning The Electrophone in the restaurant, I think I can throw some light on the subject.

The Electrophone Company was established in Britain around the turn of the century and enabled telephone subscribers who were also subscribers to The Electrophone Company to be plugged into any one of a number of West-End theatres in order to listen to the plays and shows being performed in them over the telephone.

The service involved the placement of ordinary telephone carbon granule microphones along the front of the stages of the member theatres. These microphones were linked to the local telephone exchange and thence to the company's switching centre. The service cost the customer £10 per annum and was discontinued shortly after the B.B.C. started broadcasting in the early 1920's. Customers often complained that they had difficulty hearing the actors' voices and could only hear the noise of their feet as they walked about the stage.

A similar system, called Theatrephone, existed in Paris and lasted until the outbreak of World War II.

Yours faithfully, A.L.Newman, London SW4

### Sounds Vintage

Dear Editor,

I have been trying to collect all the back numbers of the Sounds Vintage magazine which ceased publication in 1981. I decided to visit the address of its subscription dept. at 28, Chetwood Close, Billericay, Essex.

The gentleman there was surprised to hear there was still an interest in the magazine 10 years after its demise. He said he would consider a reprint of the whole run if enough people were interested. He would like as many of those to write him and let



him know; so please, folks, get writing.

Yours sincerely,

Philip Burke, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex

## John Henry Squire

Dear Sir,

I have read with interest Peter Cliffe's article on the J. H. Squire Celeste Octet in the December issue of "Hillandale News". May I be allowed to add to your information and correct one or two points?

Squire was, as Peter Cliffe wrote, born in 1880 but in London not Devon. He was actually a Cockney and extremely proud of the fact. His family did however originate in Cornwall.

He became a musician in the early 1900's and married his first wife, a pianist, in 1905. She was, according to him, a better musician than he was. They had two sons and she died ten years later.

He was never a boxer in the true sense, though he did box in his years in the Navy and this stood him in good stead later. He was in Canada and broke; he joined a touring boxing booth (taking on all-comers) and stayed with them for about three months. The other incident, mentioned in the article, of killing a man happened many years earlier, when he and another ship's boy were defending themselves against bullying on board ship.

Apart from his years with the Octet, which I believe did commence in 1914, he was Musical Director of approximately sixteen London theatres from about 1917 for many years and personally conducted "Peter Pan" for at least ten years.

He married Dorothy Beastall, as Peter Cliffe stated, in 1917 and they had one son and three daughters.

His records sold extremely well and, as the

article mentions, there are still many about. His record sales in Australia were even better than in this country.

His claim regarding Jazz concerned Irving Berlin whom he found writing tunes in New York. Two of these "Yiddle on Your Fiddle" and "Alexander's Ragtime Band" he brought to this country on behalf on a New York publishing house. He had a nostalgic meeting with Berlin when the latter visited here during the last War with his musical show "This is the Army Mr Jones".

He gave up music for health reasons in the early thirties but by 1938 the Octet was reformed and broadcasting again.

In 1939 he teamed up with a girl vocalist and with him playing his beloved 'cello they joined E.N.S.A. and toured this country and France entertaining the troops.

After the War he did lecture tours but eventually his health failed and he had to retire. He died in 1956.

His three sons have also died but his three daughters are still living. The youngest of whom signs herself,

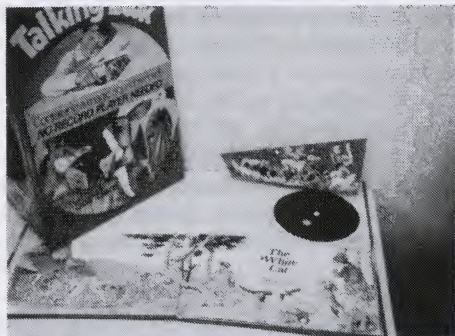
Yours truly, Joan Voysey (née Squire)

## Toy Gramophone

Dear Sir,

Having seen the advertisement for the toy gramophone kit in the December issue I was prompted to look out two children's books shown in the enclosed photograph. These were purchased at a car boot sale four years ago. A more basic reproducer of sound would be hard to imagine as they are made almost entirely of card and paper. Each book contains a fairy tale and there were four in the series. The story is read from half pages with instructions in italics to turn the disc at the appropriate point in the narrative, when the child hears what is said by one of the characters. There are four phrases separated by "bleeps".

At about 80rpm the speech is clear and audible with a total playing time of about 45 seconds, the recorded area being only 15mm wide. The disc is a "flimsy", about 12cm in diameter, having an off-centre plastic insert with a dimple for the finger-tip.



It spins on a plastic rivet, headed to prevent detachment. The sound box is part of the page, a double flap which unfolds to stand upright, and has a slot at an angle in the bottom edge to receive the needle or thorn. Unfortunately these are missing from both my books, but, from the size of the slot of a must have been about the size of a toothpick though not as long. The area around the slot is re-inforced with tinfoil. I have tried a steel needle secured with transparent tape and it works well, as does a splinter of wood. Pressure is applied to the point by a rubber band between the cover and the flap across the first fold.

The books were first published in this country by Purnell, and in the U.S.A. by Mulberry Press Inc. copyright by Staller-green Ltd. 1974. The discs were made by Novelty & Research Co. Dublin and recorded by Sound Techniques of Maidenhead.

Yours faithfully, David J. Riches, Feltham

## Harold Wilde

Dear Editor,

With reference to E. Whiteway's letter in the December issue I can confirm that Harold

Wilde was a real person. He was born in Wigan on 16th September 1876, educated at Manchester and the Royal College of Music and was described as a "gentleman of His Majesty's Chapels Royal, Marlborough House, Buckingham Palace and St.James Palace." He sang at a large number of leading London and provincial concerts, including London Symphony Concerts, Hallé Concerts and at Manchester and Western Counties Festivals. He toured the world with Watkin Mills in 1905-6. He appeared on stage in Gilbert & Sullivan with the D'Oyly Carte Opera Co. from February to June 1907 during the Savoy Repertory Season, when he replaced Pacie Ripple as principal tenor. However his D'Oyly Carte connections were wider than that, for he sang in several of the pre-electric "complete" recordings of the operas, and made a number of other records of Gilbert & Sullivan songs. On 12th December 1899, he appeared as one of the two priests in *The Magic Flute* in a matinée performance conducted by Stanford and stage-directed by the Savoyard Richard Temple.

Yours sincerely, Michael P. Walters, Tring

## Embassy Records

Dear Editor,

May I, through the columns of *Hillandale News*, appeal to readers to send me details of any Embassy records that they may have, or have noted? This is the Woolworth label from the late 1950s for which I am trying to re-construct the catalogue. If any reader has catalogues, supplements or other relevant material that they would photocopy for me (I'll pay) I would be most grateful.

This label is almost as mysterious as many of the labels of the 1920s and 1930s and may well contain performances of merit. As the last issues were made over 30 years ago it behoves us to take steps to find out what we can whilst the job is still



comparatively easy.

Yours, Bill Dean-Myatt, Sutton Coldfield

## That Voice Again

Dear Editor,

Although I must have been one of the only people to have missed hearing the "Queen Victoria" cylinder when it was broadcast in November, I have now acquired a dubbing of it and also a copy of Paul Tritton's fascinating book about its discovery.

I think it is worth drawing readers' attention to some discrepancies in Tritton's transcription of the words spoken on the cylinder: on p89, he gives: "Greetings... that the answer can be...and I've never forgotten." On p101, he replaces "can" by "must" (which seems to have been picked up by other people). In addition some of the other words are really quite doubtful: I can offer an opinion based on a long experience of listening to early recordings (Berliners!) and many playings of the dubbings of this cylinder (well over 200). The word "and" is probably not present, and "must" is definitely wrong (although "can" is reasonable). Most importantly, the word "Greetings" should be regarded as quite unlikely it cannot seriously be upheld within the context of the general intonation of the rest of the sentence. The extended interpolation ("Greetings, Britons and everybody..."), reported by Tritton and used as a title for a whole section of his book, only compounds what I consider to be an error based on flights of fancy. After all why should the Queen address a private cylinder machine in such a manner?

Unfortunately I cannot offer any sensible alternative "readings", but all the same I feel obliged to discourage interpretations which cannot be made to match the vowels, rhythm and intonation audible on this fascinating document.

Yours, Peter Adamson, St. Andrews

## REPORTS

### London Meetings:

#### (1) 19th December 1991

"The Edison Syncopators", a programme of dance music, presented by Paul Collenette, consisted mainly of Edison Diamond Discs. The Nathan Glanz Orchestra was heard playing "Easy Melody" which was followed by "Why Did I Kiss That Girl" by Tommy Monao's Orchestra. Paul told the audience some interesting facts about the recordings and their making.

"Sleepy Time Girl" by Ernie Golden's Hotel McAlpin Orchestra and "A Cup of Coffee, a Sandwich & You" played by Mike Speciale's Orchestra then followed. A good recording of the old favourite "Bye Bye Blackbird" was well received. Paul concluded his most informative programme with "Broken Idol" performed by the California Ramblers. This was an LP transfer from the original Edison Diamond Disc. Many thanks Paul.

#### (2) 16th January 1992

"An Evening With Howard Hope" proved to be a highly instructive and entertaining programme for which Howard had brought along a selection of his own stringed instruments.

The first item was a recording of an Olly Oakley banjo solo "Darktown Dandies" Howard preceded this with a short history of the banjo and a brief demonstration of playing the banjo by Howard himself. This was followed by Elliot Grimshaw's Banjo Quartet playing "Whistling Rufus".

"Ukulele Ike's" (Cliff Edwards) version of "That's My Weakness Now" was followed by a Regal promotional record for the George Formby film "Keep Fit" in which he performed the title song "Ragging The Scale" by Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang. This was prefaced by an explanation of the different styles of jazz guitar playing.



Les Paul's version of "Jazz Me Blues" on electric guitar made a grand finish to an enjoyable evening.

Good show Howard.

Geoff Edwards

### **Birmingham Meeting, 18th January 1992**

This was the A.G.M. of the Midland Group and Eddie Dunn, the Chairman, observed that we were entering our 24th year as a branch of the C.L.P.G.S. We had produced a modest boost for the branch funds. The average attendance at our meetings was maintained at a high level during the past year. two prospective new members were welcomed to this meeting at which the following officers were re-elected: Eddie Dunn, Chairman; Phil Bennett, Secretary; Roger Preston, Treasurer; and Geoff Howl, Reporter. In addition Wal Fowler was elected to the Committee in recognition of his work behind the scenes, especially

in connection with the Walsall Record Fair.

The dates and programme details for the current year were agreed:

**March 21st:** The Secretary's Jazz Night

**May 16th:** Guest on Audio Matters

**July 18th:** Wal Fowler on Comedy

**September 19th:** To be announced

**November 21st:** To be announced

**January 16th 1993:** A.G.M.

The evening ended with several members playing a selection of their favourite records or tapes. From this interesting mixed bag we heard songs by Jussi Björling, Mae West, Leslie Sarony, The Casey Court Kids, John McCormack and Helen Kane plus jazz and dance band items from Bix Beiderbecke, Fletcher Henderson and Ben Selvin.

Geoff Howl

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Proposed dates for the remainder of 1992:

July 23 (closing date May 28)

December 10 (closing date October 15)

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